

REGION 6 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

TOPIC: Bayou Corne

DATE: January 10, 2013

CONTACT: Ragan Broyles, Superfund

PURPOSE/ACTION NEEDED: For Information

DEADLINE DATE: n/a

BACKGROUND:

- June and July 2012: Assumption Parish government officials and state government investigate unexplained bubbling in Bayou Corne and Grand Bayou.
- August 2-3, 2012: An area of wooded swamp located in Bayou Corne began to subside.
- The area of concern is over the western flank of the Napoleonville salt dome in Assumption Parish.
- Investigations have confirmed that the cause of the sinkhole is the collapse wall of a salt cavern owned by Texas Brine, a brine mining company
- Brine mining wells are regulated under the UIC program by the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources (LDNR) as Class III injection wells.

CURRENT STATUS:

- EPA R6 has assisted the State with air monitoring and flights of the ASPECT plane.
- Texas Brine (TB) has been installing shallow wells (geoprobe) into the aquifers to purge the natural gas.
- TB is installing in-house gas monitors.
- Analysis by the "Science Workgroup" (LSU, U of Memphis, LDNR, USGS, Los Alamos Nat'l Lab, et al) have determined that the sinkhole will not swallow up the homes, businesses or town of Bayou Corne.
- LA Conservation Commissioner has ordered TB to install two more 6,000+ observation wells and to construct a berm around the sink hole to prevent salt water migration. TB is fighting that order in court..

ENVIRONMENTAL/PUBLIC HEALTH CONCERNS:

- Significant physical hazard.

TECHNICAL CONCERNS:

- Unstable geologic formation.

COMMUNITY CONCERNS: LDNR, State Police, and LDEQ have held multiple public availability sessions and post data on public websites. The community expects the situation to be rectified, there are no quick fixes to a sinkhole.



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